

PROCEEDINGS
of the
KENTUCKY HIGHWAY CONFERENCE

WELCOMING ADDRESS

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There was a time, when my grandfather was a boy, when a man could get his education in the common schools, and that fulfilled his needs so long as he lived. Very little change took place from one generation to another, 75 years ago. Life went on as it always had gone along. Great changes that occur rapidly today did not take place. There was change, of course, but it was a slow change. It took a long time to bring about a reform in anything. Science had not then been applied to living as it has today.

The scientist has revolutionized our lives in the last century. As a result, things that we thought were new ten years ago are now antiquated. New things and new ways of doing things have come into existence. The man who fails to keep on studying is as outmoded as a 1900 Ford car would be on the highways today. With so many new things coming out of the great laboratories of this country it is going to be more and more essential that education continue on the adult level if one is to keep up with what is going on in the world. It is true in highway construction, it is true in agriculture, it is true in engineering, it is true in government, it is true in education, it is true in medicine, it is true in every phase of life.

A year ago, when I was in Germany, I was impressed, first, by the destruction of the cities of Germany, and, second, by that country's magnificent highways. One of Hitler's autobahns, a four-lane highway between Frankfurt and Darmstadt, was a revelation to me. I had never seen a highway like this before. The Pennsylvania Turnpike was the greatest highway I had ever seen, but the autobahns built by Hitler during the depression

years in Germany, while we were having our depression over here, are far better than anything we have in the United States, even including the Pennsylvania highway. I was there on a mission of the U. S. Military Government to visit the universities in Germany, to see what they were like, and to report my observations. Consequently, a car and chauffeur were placed at my disposal. Everywhere I went I found four-lane highways, far broader than ours, and with underpasses or overpasses for the crossroads. I wish that every highway engineer in America could go to Germany to see those highways. Perhaps the United States could not build such highways because of the cost involved. In a country like this where we pay good wages and everything is high, the expense of constructing similar roads might be prohibitive.

You men who work on highways are serving the public well. I can remember when Kentucky was broken up into sections; when the mountains were against the Bluegrass and the Bluegrass was against Louisville, and Louisville was against all the state. The coming of highways has done much to break down these barriers of prejudice and intolerance, and we are rapidly becoming one people. The whole state is a unit, and we are thinking as a unit.

I never get a group this large together without telling them something about the University of Kentucky. Many of you are graduates, all of you are stockholders, of this corporation known as the University of Kentucky. It too is one of the agencies that breaks down barriers between people. While that is not the primary function of the University, it is certainly one of the by-products.

The University of Kentucky is a big organization. Today it is like a boy growing up, perhaps several inches in a single year, who cannot wear the clothing that was purchased for him the year before. When the war was over, the University doubled in student population. The largest number of students we had before the war was 3805, and we thought the University was pretty big. Dr. Frank L. McVey, the former President, told me when I became President in 1941 that the University was designed to take care of about 4000 students. When enrollment suddenly jumps from 4000 to 7868 students there are many new

problems to face. Hundreds of our student-veterans brought along with them their wives and children. Last year there were 654 babies on the campus. All of the University's services had to be extended. Housing had to be provided at a time when few houses were being built. Classroom and laboratory space had to be found. Heating, lighting, parking, and all of the other services of the University have been overtaxed by the influx of students. The services of the University that have to be obtained as a result of growing from an institution of 3800 students to an institution of approximately 8000 students will cost about \$2,000,000 if the University of Kentucky is to serve the state effectively.

Despite the handicaps under which we must labor, we are turning out some wonderful men and women each year. More of them were graduated last June in a single class than were graduated during the forty-two years that Dr. James K. Patterson was president of the institution. We shall have a still larger class this year, young men and women who will add to the wealth of this state as no other group of people of their generation have. They will go out from the University prepared to do jobs that will create wealth. Only as people are educated to a higher level do they become more productive. Only as they are educated will they be able to do those things that require skill and ability. I am confident that when the people of Kentucky invest \$1.00 in the University of Kentucky, it yields to them \$10 in dividends.

We have made one discovery in the Agricultural Experiment Station that brings in more wealth every year to Kentucky than the University has cost over a long period of years, and that is the discovery of how to control root rot in tobacco. We are developing a grass now, Kentucky Fescue 31, that will revolutionize the agriculture of many sections of this state and make it possible for livestock to graze the year round in pastures that are now brown and barren through the entire winter. That did not happen by accident; that happened because we have scientists here who are constantly working on better farming methods, and we have county agents who take these findings into every county in Kentucky. We are short, far short, of the resources we need in order to carry this program on, but despite that the University is a "going" concern.

It seems that it is very easy to enlist the interest and support of people in the athletic program of the University, and I am profoundly interested in it. We must have a good program in athletics; but we must not let that program out-run our program in engineering, in agriculture, in law, in graduate study, in research, in culture. We need a balanced program. If we have the best basketball team in the nation, and there is no doubt in my mind that we do, we ought to have the best Chemistry Department and the best Department of Highway Engineering and the best Department of Physics and Mathematics and English.

The first great need of the University today is additional dormitories. We are not asking the state to stand the whole cost of these dormitories. We are making a sporting proposition to the Governor and the General Assembly—fifty-fifty—the state to put up 50% of the cost of these dormitories, the University to match this with revenue bonds which can be paid off in rents that students will pay. Then there will be room enough on the campus, living quarters sufficient to take care of all the boys and girls who want to come to the University. Did you know that the state of Kentucky has built but one dormitory on this campus, and that in 1904? That was Patterson Hall, and I believe the state put up \$35,000 or \$40,000 to build it. The time has come when the Commonwealth of Kentucky must take care of the needs of its University. The campus of the University is the state of Kentucky and, as I have said again and again, you cannot have a great state without a great state University. One state after another that have developed great state universities have had a phenomenal development industrially and financially, and today they are the rich states of the nation. There is no doubt in my mind that because these states had the vision to create great state universities they have reaped an abundant harvest. It can be done—it must be done—in Kentucky!